

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

Majority (202) 225-5051
Minority (202) 225-6074

Opening Statement

The Honorable Jeff Flake, Ranking Member

Hearing on
“Training and Equipping Afghan Security Forces:
Unaccounted Weapons and Strategic Challenges”

National Security and Foreign Affairs Subcommittee
February 12, 2009

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The Oversight and Government Reform Committee has a unique mandate. Unlike authorizing committees with narrow jurisdiction, the Committee has broad authority to oversee nearly all federal programs, policies, and procedures. It does this with an eye toward weeding out waste, fraud, and abuse, and to ensure proper management and administration.

But we are not simply an oversight committee.

In our “reform” capacity, this Committee must articulate constructive solutions. We must ensure that when we examine a program or initiative, we also identify more efficient and appropriate mechanisms to achieve the same ends. In so doing, it is essential that the individuals responsible for developing and implementing policy are present at every hearing to explain their actions.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to using this approach in overseeing the national security and foreign affairs arena.

The United States faces many national security challenges. At the forefront is terrorism. Since 9/11, we have been combating terrorism in two theaters; one in Afghanistan and one in Iraq. In both cases, this Administration continues significant policies outlined by the Bush Administration.

We must also ensure that the programs supporting this effort are fiscally responsible and effective.

Today’s hearing is an excellent place to begin our oversight and reform efforts.